

Bromley Bee News Monthly Update Published by the Bromley Beekeepers

Welcome to the **June 2004** issue of Bromley News.



6th June 2004 Bromley Apiary Meeting

I increased my hives from three to four by splitting my strongest stock and letting them raise a new queen. The parent stock has been a consistent producer and a joy to handle for many years, so with luck I'll get the same qualities/genes passed on to the newly mated queen.

Shook Swarms

I have done a few shook swarms so far this season, all with good results; you can do it with any medium to strong colony. It's amazing how a colony can recover from the shook swarm treatment and go on to fill honey supers when the conditions are right.

Why do a shook swarm?

- Part of your swarm control
- A fresh start with new frames and foundation
- To remove any disease lurking in the old frames

If you destroy the old brood you remove/trap a huge number of varroa mites. This is my preferred method on a sunny day:

1. Move the brood box to one side standing it on its upturned roof.
2. Run a blow lamp over the original floor board or replace with a fresh one.
3. Place a new brood box with new frames and foundation on the floor board and refit the original crown board which has been blow lamped.
4. Place a running in board across the hive's full entrance width (sloping downwards) and cover with a cotton sheet making sure there are no gaps at the sides.
5. Gently shake all the bees off the combs on to the covered board, work methodically, avoid using a bee brush in case you damage the queen. Should you spot the queen during the operation make sure she goes back into the hive safely.



Feed them only if the weather is unfavourable over the next few days. I recommend you leave the hive undisturbed for seven days before opening them again.

Internet Resources

Apis-UK Online Beekeeping Newsletter

www.beedata.com/apis-uk/newsletters04/apis-uk0504.htm

Apis-UK May issue No.24 prints to 27 sides of A4. **Contents:** Editorial; Beekeeping news; Bee press; Research News; Articles: Always be open about your beekeeping David Ashton. Bee sense and sensibility (part 1 of 5) Ian Rumsey. Nuclei, their definition, making and use John Yates. Nettles, Nettles, Nettles and beekeeping for complete novices Mathew Allen; Poem of the Month Bee Musings Ian Rumsey; Recipe of the Month Marinated Mackerel; Fact File Honeydew; Historical Note; Readers Letters: Margaret Cowley, Brian Hughes, Walter Coultrup; Diary of events and more. Total D/L 213KB.

Steven Turner

Pyrethroid Resistance Found in Kent

The NBU has recently confirmed a new outbreak of pyrethroid resista varroa near Sandwich in Kent - the first found in the South East Region. This arose as a result of routine surveillance for pyrethroid resistance by CSL bee inspectors. Field testing initially found signs of resistance in a single apiary where unusually large numbers of varroa mites were present despite recent treatment with pyrethroid strips. The presence of resistance was confirmed by subsequent testing of mites from the same apiary at the NBU laboratory. Following this discovery bee inspectors have carried out further tests in the same area and these have revealed the presence of resistance in two further apiaries. There is no known link between the affected apiaries and outbreaks of resistance in the South West or elsewhere.

So far resistance surveillance elsewhere in Kent has shown normal susceptibility of varroa to pyrethroids. However, we will be carrying out further resistance testing over the next few months to attempt to establish the scale of the new outbreak. This development makes it essential that beekeepers in or near to the affected area should now start to look for signs of resistance in their own colonies. Further details on resistance testing and management are available from the National Bee Unit website: www.nationalbeeunit.com or from Alan Byham, South East Regional Bee Inspector Tel: 01737 230846 Email: a.byham @ csl.gov.uk. If you have any questions or comments please feel free to get in touch. James Morton National Bee Inspector, Central Science Laboratory - National Bee Unit Tel/fax: 020 8571 6450 Mobile: 07719 924 418 E-mail: j.morton @ csl.gov.uk

Apiary News

At last I am going ahead with the Queen Rearing Programme. I admit it is a slow start but at least a start has been made. I only hope my breeder queen will have the energy of her predecessor and that her offspring produce the docile characteristics we have got used to over the past few years.

Members have brought nuke boxes with bees but without queens along in the hope that the good temper comes from the drones around the apiary, but the more of you who take part in this exercise the better the chance of reaching our goal.

Clive is gradually working through the request list for swarms and if you still want one and have not put in your request do it now. As I have said before, always change the queen after the swarm has settled down, as there is no point in propagating a swarming strain after all the work that has been done to slow down the swarming instinct.

The South of England Show at Ardingly takes place on the 10th, 11th and 12th this month. If you decide to go John Henman and I will be manning the observation hive on the first two days and we will be pleased to see you.

On **Saturday the 12th** we are staging a display at St Christopher's School Beckenham which is always a most pleasant event. Our new tent will no doubt raise a few eyebrows.

Don't forget National Insect Week starts on the 14th. The best contribution we can make is to sit down quietly in the garden and carry out a count of the different species of Bumble Bee we can see and send the results to Rothamstead.

There will be the usual third **Sunday Meeting the 20th June**. On Wednesday the 23rd several of us will be departing on Beetour for the South of France and return late on Tuesday 29th so we will be back in good time for the display at Hayes Common, not an event I would like to miss. Remember that there is no apiary meeting on the first Sunday of July or August. The so called June Gap has been quite noticeable this year, let us hope the good weather holds out.

Peter Springall

A Home-bred Queen

On the 2nd May I was working through one of my hives at Barnmead Road, Beckenham, when I found a number of sealed queen cells. This particular colony had built up well and I decided to try to raise a queen from it.

I had a three-frame nuc box with me, so I took one frame with two good sealed queen cells and some brood, a second frame with plenty of brood and a third frame, which was very heavy with stores. I shook in bees from two more frames and closed it up for the night.



The following day, Bank Holiday Monday, I got up early and went to my apiary site at 6am, collected the nuc box and took it to the Club Apiary so that I could take advantage of the docile drones prevalent in Peter Springall's hives, if I was lucky enough to hatch a queen. I unfastened the nuc entrance and left the box there to await the course of nature.

I decided to give it the best chance possible and not disturb it for a month, except a quick inspection of the vicinity when passing, to monitor flight activity – which appeared strong and consistent.

At the Club apiary meeting on Sunday 6 th June – under Peter's eagle eye and shoulder to shoulder with at least a dozen members we "opened the box!" We were delighted to see eggs and larvae in cells, which could only be very recent and some sealed brood. There was also a marked increase in the population. So much so, that Peter advised that the nuc should be expanded to a colony as soon as possible.

At this stage I had been rudely bundled to the back of the crowd by eager and determined onlookers (I'm used to it by now) but by standing on somebody's shoulders, (I think it was Claire,) I could just see the queen as it was found by somebody with better eyesight than I have. Peter marked her with Tippex in the customary Bromley Beekeeper's ad hoc manner and we restored the nuc to quiet tranquillity. I always smile when Peter is pontificating about colour of the year – Green, Blue, White, Yellow, Red, because I know it will always end up being Tippex-white. For 2007 I am going to buy him a tube of yellow Tippex – I don't think they do any other colour.



As usual it was quite remarkable to witness the docility of the bees. Peter's smoker having proved unwilling to be ignited, we had opened it and manipulated without smoke. It made the queen easier to find, of course, but the calm, unhurried manner of the bees was a delight to see. The cloud of bees trying to find flying space around the unprotected heads of the crowd of members without stinging them is a familiar sight at our apiary but very encouraging if I can promote the same attitude on my own site.



The game-plan to get my queen hatched and then mated with the placid drones of Kenthouse Road was a success. There is something very satisfying in starting up a new colony from a queen cell in this manner. I intend to move the nucleus during the evening on Tuesday 8th June and hive it in a full brood box at my apiary in Addiscombe (about 3 miles away.)

Mike Oliver

Diary Dates

Sunday 20th June 3:00pm - The branch afternoon apiary meeting. Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management if the weather permits. Tea and biscuits provided.

Sunday 18th July 3:00pm - The branch afternoon apiary meeting. Beekeeping demonstrations and hive management if the weather permits. Tea and biscuits provided.

The Kent County Bees and Honey Show

Friday, Saturday and Sunday 16th - 18th July 2004 (entries close 9th July) - Kent County Bees and Honey Show, organised by the Kent Bee-Keepers' Association in conjunction with Dover, Medway and Thanet Beekeepers' Associations at the Kent County Showground Detling, Maidstone. Judges: Honey Mr. M. Duffin, Cakes & Wax Mrs. E.Duffin, Schools Mr. & Mrs. L.Gordon-Sales. Entries Secretary: Mrs.M.Hill, Old Whittington, Old Wives Lees, Canterbury , CT4 8BH Tel: 01227 730477. Show Supervisor: Michael Wall 020-8302-7355. Chief Steward: Sally Hardy 07802763048. Download show schedules and entry forms in PDF format from the URL: <http://www.kentbee.com/kentnews.htm>

New Forest & Hampshire County Show

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 27th - 29th July 2004 - The Showground, New Park, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7QH, organised by the New Forest Beekeepers' Association. If you would like a schedule contact Mrs Margaret Davies, 80 Leybourne Avenue , Ensbury Park , Bournemouth BH10 6HE. Tel: 01202 526077 E-mail: marg @ jdavies.freereserve.co.uk

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Visit our website www.kentbee.com/bromley

Advertisements

(free to members or £10.00 for non-members)

Nucs for Sale

Catford beekeeper Gregory Boon is making up nucleus for sale this month with newly mated queens from his docile bees. Tel: 020-8697-1413 Website: www.wholesomehoney.co.uk

Bumble Gear

Give yourself a treat, or your wife, maybe a girlfriend. Keep up with the Jones's or those European beekeepers. Food quality stainless steel buckets with lids **£15 each**. This is half price, no handles coming off when heated. Tel: 020-8395-6852

David Harris

Is now an approved Thorne agent able to supply all beekeeping needs at a discount. 49 Shawbrooke Road , Eltham SE9 6AL . A telephone call before calling is much appreciated 020-8850-7826 Web: www.busybusybee.demon.co.uk

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